

**State Technical Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**NRCS State Office Conference Room**  
**January 11, 2007**

Shannon Zezula welcomed everyone to the meeting. Jane Hardisty also welcomed all and asked that everyone introduce themselves. She welcomed new members - Ryan Westerfeld, IDEM and Zachary Smith, IDNR-Forestry. She then proceeded to update the committee on the current budget. (See Handout 1)

Jane announced that Roger Kult has been selected for the Assistant for Operations position effective February 5, 2007. She also announced that she has been asked to serve as the Regional Assistant Chief – Central Region, in Washington, DC, on a detail for 30 days or less effective February 5, 2007. Xavier Montoya will be acting in Jane's absence.

Jane asked Tammy Lawson, ISDA, to update the committee on the state's budget. Tammy stated that there is a proposed increase to the Division of Soil Conservationist's budget although the Indiana Department of Agriculture's budget is projected to remain the same. Programs that leverage federal funds such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) are being looked at favorably.

### **NRCS Plant Materials Ash Seed Collection Initiative**

Ken Collins, State Forester, NRCS, gave a presentation on the invasion of the Emerald Ash Borer. (See <http://www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/pmc.html> (or [www.ashseed.org](http://www.ashseed.org)) for more information and forms needed to collect seed). He has posters for distribution and will also be sending posters to the SWCDs and Extension offices. If you're interested in using the posters, please contact Ken for a supply.

### **Bio-Energy Demands in Relation to Farm Bill Program Participants**

Barry Fisher, State Agronomist, NRCS, gave a presentation on the harvesting of corn residue and corn after corn rotations and how they impact our resources. He also stated that there are huge economic opportunities within the bio-energy field. He stated that the market could demand an additional 100-110 million bushels of corn in Indiana. To meet this demand we need to be looking at increasing production rather than bringing environmentally sensitive lands back into production.

### **FY 07 Farm Bill Programs Update**

Harold Thompson, ASTC-Programs, NRCS, updated the committee on funding allocations NRCS has received. WHIP-\$602,000; WRP-\$9.1 million; EQIP-\$10.9 million; and a special allocation for EQIP Ground and Surface Water Conservation-\$235,000. He also distributed the final Environmental Quality Incentives Program Indiana State Guidelines. (See Indiana Bulletin No. 300-7-8 at <http://www.in.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/bulletins.html> and soon to be posted on the NRCS Indiana web site under Programs)

### **FY 2007 Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)**

Jill Reinhart, ASTC-Outreach and Communications, NRCS, gave a presentation regarding the CIG program and how it operates. (See Handouts 5 and [http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/pdf\\_files/CIGfactsheet3-1-06.pdf](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/pdf_files/CIGfactsheet3-1-06.pdf))

Harold Thompson recommended to Jane that we not offer a state component.

If anyone is interested in participating in a CIG Peer Review Group (2 per state may be nominated) at the National Office for 5 days beginning March 26<sup>th</sup>, please contact Jane or Harold by January 26, 2006. National Office will pay for the travel costs.

### **EQIP Ground and Surface Water Conservation**

Shannon Zezula reviewed the proposal for obligating EQIP FY07 Ground and Surface Water Conservation Funds in Indiana. (See [http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/eqip\\_gswc\\_fs101305.pdf](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/eqip_gswc_fs101305.pdf))

A recommendation will be presented to Jane on how to implement the proposal. He also asked for the State Technical Committee's assistance in getting the word out about this program. (See Handout 8)

Indiana NRCS will e-mail the committee a final definition for specialty crop as requested.

### **FSA State Cost-Share Plan**

Gail Peas, FSA, distributed the draft Indiana State CRP Cost-Share Plan. (See Handout 9) She stated in order to have consistency in determining cost rates, FSA has established State CRP Cost-Share Rates that are in line with EQIP. The FSA State Committee has to approve them and they are meeting in February. Contact Gail if you have any questions or concerns.

### **Other Issues**

Jeff Kiefer, US Fish and Wildlife Service, stated that President Bush signed the Bill – Partner for Fish and Wildlife Act. It gives authorization for up to \$75 million per year for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

Marylou Renshaw, IDEM, stated that two new watershed specialists will be hired.

Larry Clemons, The Nature Conservancy, stated that they received a large grant from a foundation to expand work in the Maumee River Watershed.

Tammy Lawson, ISDA, stated they received 8 Trimble robotic total stations for the 8 Conservation Implementation Teams.

Jennifer Boyle, IASWCD, reminded everyone that the annual conference would be held next week, January 16<sup>th</sup>.

Julia Wickard, Indiana Beef Cattle Association, stated that they will be holding 10 regional beef meetings with the Purdue Board of Animal Health. The main discussion will be Bio-Energy Fuels. The national convention will be held the first week of February. She also stated the state convention will be February 24<sup>th</sup> at Dow Agrochemical on the west side of Indianapolis. She stated that the Beef Association is trying to foster a relationship with the Dairy Association and Dave Forgey has joined the Indiana Beef Cattle Association's Board of Directors.

Mike Baise, Farm Bureau, stated they have hired a Livestock Development Specialist.

Shannon and Jane have scheduled the next Indiana State Technical Committee meetings on: **April 17, 2007; July 19, 2007 and September 25, 2007**. They will be from 1:00-4:00 in the NRCS State Office Conference Room.